

teacher resource guide

schooltime performance series



turning 15 on the road to freedom

Written by Lynda Blackmon Lowery

arts
education
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about the performance

What would you do to make the world a better place?

Lynda Blackmon Lowery was only a teenager but she put her beliefs on the line when she decided to participate in the 1960s civil rights movement engulfing the South. Inspired by leaders like Martin Luther King, Jr, she was jailed nine times before her 15th birthday in protest marches demanding the right to vote for African Americans, as well as other rights. She was one of the youngest participants of the famous first march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama in 1965. On that day, forever dubbed Bloody Sunday, state police attacked nonviolent protesters, including Lowery, who was injured in the melee.

Her story as a young protester and those heady days are distilled into *Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom*, a dynamic and moving account of her story. Told in powerful words and songs from the movement, a talented ensemble cast conveys to the audience what Lowery and other activists had to endure in the fight for freedom.

Actress Ally Sheedy, best known for her work in *The Breakfast Club* and *High Art*, adapted and directed the theater piece from a memoir by Lowery. It was first developed at a workshop at Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School for Music, Art and Performing Arts in New York City. The young actress Damaras Obi was tapped for the lead role in the production. The first performance was in 2016 at the Montgomery C. Smith Intermediate School in Hudson, New York, where 500 people witnessed a powerhouse portrayal of Lowery by Obi. Since then, the production team has been holding performances of this theater piece across the country to wide acclaim.

details on the production

Featuring: Damaras Obi as Lynda Blackmon Lowery

Developed for the stage by Ally Sheedy

Directed by Fracaswell Hyman

Music Director Joshua Campbell

Produced by Miranda Barry and Amy Sprecher

about lynda blackmon lowery

Lynda Blackmon Lowery, who still lives in Selma, wrote an illustrated, award-winning memoir for young readers about her experience as a marcher in the Selma Movement: *Turning 15 On The Road To Freedom: My Story of the 1965 Selma Voting Rights March*. Writers Elspeth Leacock and Susan Buckley helped Lowery with the memoir while P. J. Loughran illustrated evocative images to go with the text.

Today, Lowery is a speaker on civil rights issues and works as a case manager at a mental health center.

“I would like for young people to know that each day of your life is a journey into history. You have the ability to change something each day of your life. Believe it or not, people, it can’t happen without you,” she said in an interview with NPR.

During the melee on Bloody Sunday, Lowery was tear-gassed and beaten. She came away with 7 stitches over her right eye and 28 stitches on the back of her head. She still has those scars to this day.

“I like to tell people by the age of 15 I had been jailed nine times. The first time we actually went to jail, I was kind of scared. But we had each other’s back. What we were going to do with each other’s backs, I don’t know, because those big policemen had guns and so forth. But we were there for each other,” she said.



Lynda Blackman Lowery

in the spotlight

Questions with **Susan Buckley & Elspeth Leacock**

How was the idea of the book born?

Actually, we told Lynda’s story twice. The first time was in our book *Journeys for Freedom* which includes 20 true stories of American history. For that book, we wanted a story of a young person who participated in the voting rights movement in Selma, so we called the small museum there and had the extraordinary luck to have Lynda’s sister JoAnne pick up the phone. It was she who brought the three of us together.

After that book was published, we began to make presentations to teachers and children with Lynda and got to know and love her. As we marveled at Lynda’s powerful empathy, determination, love, and bravery in the face of terror, it hit us, we can work together to bring a larger story to young adults everywhere. That’s when we began writing *Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom* together.

What was it like to work with Lynda Blackmon Lowery?

Working with Lynda has been one of the greatest experiences of both of our lives! For the several years it took us to write the book together and the three years since its publication, we have become the closest of friends, a threesome, who admire and love one another deeply.

Lynda has been an incredibly generous part of our collaboration. She has shared a painful yet triumphant story with us, little by little. And she never ceases to include us in the praise she receives for telling her story.

How did you approach writing the book?

We interviewed Lynda over the phone and have 35+ hours of transcriptions from those interviews. In addition, Elspeth went to Selma to visit some of the important sites with Lynda and to learn more about certain aspects of her story. We also read extensively about the Selma Movement, the March, the key people involved, and the voting rights movement overall.

What was your reaction when you heard Ally Sheedy was going to adapt the book?

We were thrilled with Ally’s idea of creating a one-woman show with her LaGuardia High School student, Damaras Obi. The three of us met with Ally and Damaras ahead of time and gave them our permission to base the performance on our book.

Did you watch a performance? What was your reaction?

Yes, of course. We have seen the performance many times, from the very beginning at LaGuardia High School, through the past few years, and now the incredibly exciting expanded version of the play. We have loved it from the beginning but find its new incarnation even more dynamic and moving than before. Damaras Obi is her same extraordinary and moving self but the addition of the other actors, as sort of a Greek chorus, expands the play in important ways.

Do you think the story still has relevance for today? And why?

Unfortunately, the story has even more relevance today than it did a few years ago, as the Supreme Court has gutted key parts of the Voting Rights Act and, in response, states are passing laws that restrict voting rights once again. And in this time of controversy and partisanship, it is all the more critical for young people to feel that they can make a difference, that through their actions they can effect change.

Why do you think Lowery’s story resonates with people?

First of all, the fact that it is a first-person story, not a nonfiction account, allows readers (and viewers) to identify with Lynda. And in telling her story, Lynda shows her vulnerability, her fears, and her determination in ways that can inspire others.

What do you hope kids will take away from the story?

As Lynda says at the end of *Turning 15*, with determination, “You can change the world.” She wants young people to know that they can be history makers, just like her.

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inspired ideas in the classroom

	Teacher Focus	Student Activity	NJ Student Learning Standards
Prepare for the performance	<p><i>If you have...</i>15 minutes: Introduce Lynda Blackmon Lowery with the NPR audio interview “Illustrated Memoir Recalls Marching In Selma At Just 15.” Content link: tinyurl.com/yb7bl9c4 Credit: NPR Book Notes</p> <p><i>If you have...</i>30 minutes: Have the students view the video of excerpted scenes from a performance of the stage play <i>Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom</i>. Content link: tinyurl.com/ya2ahskk Credit: Turning 15 on the Road</p>	<p>Listen to the interview with Lynda Blackmon Lowery and discuss the following: Lynda Blackmon Lowery was only 14 when she started marching for Voting Rights.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why was this cause important to someone so young?• How do you feel about children being involved in protests? <p>Watch the video of <i>Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom</i>, and discuss the following: The first spoken dialogue of the play is: “By the time I was fifteen, I had been in jail nine times.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What expectations does this set up for the audience? <p>The actress in the play directly addresses the audience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does this performance technique help engage the audience?	<p>English Language Arts NJSLA.SL1 NJSLA.SL2</p> <p>Social Studies 6.1.4.A.9 6.1.4.A.10 6.1.4.A.11</p> <p>Visual & Performing Arts 1.4 Aesthetic Response & Critique Methodologies</p>
Experience the performance	<p>Discuss how watching a live concert differs from a static recording.</p> <p>Encourage the students to watch and listen for key moments and features of the theatrical performance.</p>	<p>While watching the stage play <i>Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom</i>, consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does the production use live singing and recorded audio to tell the story?• What theatrical elements help the lead actress Damaras Obi transform into Lynda Blackmon Lowery at the age of 15?• Compare the recorded clips of play with the live performance. Which is more powerful? Why?	<p>English Language Arts NJSLA.SL1 NJSLA.SL2</p> <p>Social Studies 6.1.4.A.9 6.1.4.A.10 6.1.4.A.11</p> <p>Visual & Performing Arts 1.1 The Creative Process 1.4 Aesthetic Response & Critique</p>
Reflect, respond and read	<p>Ask students for a written response about their favorite moments from the stage play. Have the students read an excerpt from the book <i>Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom</i>. Content link: tinyurl.com/y9a23mys Credit: NPR Book Notes</p>	<p>Write about the part of the live stage play that resonated with you most.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why do you feel this moment had a lasting impact on you? <p>Read an excerpt from the book <i>Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom</i> (Lynda Blackmon Lowery).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How did the play convey key details found in this excerpted text?	<p>English Language Arts NJSLA.SL1 NJSLA.SL2</p> <p>Social Studies 6.1.4.A.9 6.1.4.A.10 6.1.4.A.11</p> <p>Visual & Performing Arts 1.4 Aesthetic Response & Critique Methodologies</p>
Focus	<p><i>For grades 4-6:</i> Have the students watch video clips of Marley Dias speaking about her #1000BlackGirlBooks campaign about diversity in literature. Content links: youtu.be/G_pmoWmST8s Credit: The View; youtu.be/ExggENIPP2c Credit: Scholastic</p> <p><i>For grades 7-12:</i> Have the students watch video clips about the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Content links: youtu.be/-nrpLVgO7l4 Credit: The History Channel youtu.be/QZEoa5-p9pg Credit: CNN</p>	<p>Watch the video clips and answer the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do Marley Dias and Lynda Blackmon Lowery have in common?• Why do you think Marley Dias’s 1000 Black Girl Books campaign went viral?• What issues and causes do you think deserve attention? <p>Watch the video clips and answer the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why was the Voting Rights Act of 1965 a vital piece of legislation for the African-American community?• How did the formation of SNCC help youth make a difference in the Voting Act of 1965?• What issues and causes do you think deserve attention in your community?	<p>English Language Arts NJSLA.SL1 NJSLA.SL2</p> <p>Social Studies 6.1.4.A.9 6.1.4.A.10 6.1.4.A.11</p>
Originate	<p>Have each group plan a campaign to raise awareness for their issue.</p> <p><i>Grades 4-6:</i> Review how Lynda Blackmon Lowery and Marley Dias participated in their campaigns. Ask the students what techniques they can use to ensure their message goes viral and reaches as many people as possible.</p> <p><i>Grades 7-12:</i> Review how Lynda Blackmon Lowery and SNCC participated in their campaigns. Ask the students what techniques they can use to ensure their message goes viral and reaches as many people as possible.</p>	<p>Plan a campaign to raise awareness for your issue.</p> <p><i>Grades 4-6:</i> Consider how Lynda Blackmon Lowery and Marley Dias participated in their campaigns. What techniques can you use to ensure your message goes viral and reaches as many people as possible?</p> <p><i>Grades 7-12:</i> Consider how Lynda Blackmon Lowery and SNCC participated in their campaigns. What techniques can you use to ensure your message goes viral and reaches as many people as possible?</p>	<p>English Language Arts NJSLA.SL1 NJSLA.SL2</p> <p>Social Studies 6.1.4.A.9 6.1.4.A.10 6.1.4.A.11</p> <p>Visual & Performing Arts 1.1 The Creative Process</p>
Rehearse	<p>Prepare: Share Marley Dias’s three tips for advocacy: Be true. Be passionate. Use your community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Be true:</i> Arm yourself with facts and reality about your topic.• <i>Be passionate:</i> Share why this issue is important to you and your community.• <i>Use your community:</i> Reach out to people in your lives who might have knowledge about your topic and can offer guidance. Ask friends and family members to volunteer their time to help with your campaign. <p>Have the students prepare to roll out their campaign. Remind the students to promote ahead of time to ensure their message reaches as many people as possible.</p>	<p>Prepare: Make preparations to roll out your campaign in a timely fashion. Remember to promote to your target audience ahead of time to ensure your message reaches as many people as possible.</p> <p>Rehearse: Rehearse your event or presentation in front of your classmates. Ask questions about and offer feedback on the other campaigns.</p>	<p>Social Studies 6.1.4.A.12</p> <p>Visual & Performing Arts 1.1 The Creative Process 1.3 Performance</p>
Make magic	<p>Raise Awareness! Students debut their campaigns through an event or digital presentation. Encourage students to offer tangible ways that their audience can help spread the message about their cause.</p>	<p>Raise Awareness! Debut your campaign through an event or digital presentation. Remember to offer tangible ways that your audience can help spread the message about the cause.</p>	<p>Social Studies 6.1.4.A.11</p> <p>Visual & Performing Arts 1.3 Performance</p>

curriculum standards

NJ Arts Standards

1.1 The Creative Process

All students will demonstrate an understanding of the elements and principles that govern the creation of works of art in dance, music, theatre and visual art.

1.2 History of Arts & Culture

All students will understand the role, development and influence of the arts throughout history and across cultures.

1.3 Performance

All students will synthesize skills, media, methods and technologies that are appropriate to creating, performing and/or presenting works of art in dance, music, theatre and visual art.

1.4 Aesthetic Response & Critique

All students will demonstrate and apply an understanding of arts philosophies, judgment and analysis to works of art in dance, music, theatre and visual art.

National Arts Standards

- 1:** Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- 5:** Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
- 6:** Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.
- 7:** Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- 8:** Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- 11:** Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

FIND THE STANDARDS

For more detailed information on the standards, visit these websites:

NJ ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/2016/ela/

NJ SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS

www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/2014/ss/

NJ ARTS STANDARDS

www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/2009/1.pdf

NATIONAL ARTS STANDARDS

www.nationalartsstandards.org

new jersey student learning standards

English Language Arts

NJSLSA.SL1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

NJSLSA.SL2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

Social Studies

6.1.4.A.9

Compare and contrast responses of individuals and groups, past and present, to violations of fundamental rights (e.g. fairness, civil rights, human rights).

6.1.4.A.10

Describe how the actions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and other civil rights leaders served as catalysts for social change and inspired social activism in subsequent generations.

6.1.4.A.11

Explain how the fundamental rights of the individual and the common good of the country depend upon all citizens exercising their civic responsibilities at the community, state, national, and global levels.

6.1.4.A.12

Explain the process of creating change at the local, state, or national level.



cultural connections

The Story Behind the Selma Movement

Putting it mildly, it was not easy to vote as a black person in the American South. When it came to voting, there were many obstacles enacted during the Jim Crow Era targeting African Americans and the poor. These included poll taxes, grandfather clauses, literacy tests, and other voter suppression tactics - even including violence. Racists authority figures in the South were not above using violent means to curtail people's desire to exercise their constitutional rights, all in the name to ensure white supremacy.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 made many of these tactics illegal, but the long road to get there was arduous, difficult, and littered, unfortunately, with casualties. The Selma Movement that arose in the 1960s was part of that drive to open voting for all. It's a story with courageous heroes like Martin Luther King, Jr, and ordinary folks like Lynda Blackmon Lowery who were called to action during a harrowing time.

Alabama state leaders were keen to deny African Americans and many poor whites the right to vote, encapsulating it into law in a new state constitution in 1901. The constitution required people to pay a poll tax and pass a literacy test, along with meeting a grandfather clause. The laws were subjectively meted out, with even educated blacks being denied the vote, let alone register.

The Selma Movement in Alabama first started when the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the the Dallas County Voters League (DCVL) started a voter registration drive in 1963. They met with fierce white resistance from organizations like the Ku Klux Klan as well as state and local officials. These white supremacists threatened to get people fired, evicted from their homes, boycott black-owned businesses, restrict registration hours, and of course, violence. Activists were subjected to beatings, arrests, and death threats. Because of the violence, activists reached out to King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), comprised of many notable civil rights leaders.

In one nighttime march on February 18, 1965, activists were protesting in Marion, Alabama in Perry County when local police, including state troopers, attacked.

One of the marchers, Jimmie Lee Jackson, a church deacon, fled to a cafe during the attack with his mother and grandfather. An Alabama State Trooper, Corporal James Bonard Fowler, shot Jackson at point-blank range in the stomach while Jackson was trying to protect his relatives in the cafe. It was a bloody scene. Jackson fled the cafe as he was beaten by police and collapsed in a heap at a bus station.

Eight days later, Jackson died from an infection of a gunshot wound. The outcry and grief over his death fueled the idea for a march from Selma to the state capital of Montgomery. James Bevel, a leader and minister who was part of SCLC, came up with the idea during a fiery sermon at a memorial service for Jackson. Bevel, King, and other activists then set out to organize a peaceful march.

The first march took place on March 7, which later became known as Bloody Sunday. About 600 marchers, including a young Lowery, attempted to march from Selma to Montgomery but were met with fierce resistance from state and local police who beat them, arrested them, and launched tear gas canisters at the marchers who were trying to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge. In an iconic photo from that day, Amelia Boynton Robinson was shown unconscious after suffering a beating from police. Fellow activists cradled her while trying to get her away from danger.

Activists decided to march a second time on March 9, now known as Turn Around Tuesday. Due to compromises and legal maneuvering, King decided to come to the bridge and turn around with a large group of activists, thus never making it to Montgomery. That night, a white minister James Reeb, who had joined the activists, was beaten by white supremacists and later died from his injuries.

Activists then decided to do third march, which began on March 21 and lasted for five days. Each day, they walked 10 miles along U.S. Route 80, also known as Jefferson Davis Highway. They were escorted along the way by 2,000 U.S. Army soldiers, 1,900 Alabama National Guard members, and Federal Marshals and FBI agents. They finally entered Montgomery on March 24 and made it to the state capital building the next day. On the steps of the building, King delivered a stirring speech, now known as "How Long, Not Long."

(continued on next page)

cultural connections

“They told us we wouldn’t get here. And there were those who said that we would get here only over their dead bodies,” said King. “But all the world today knows that we are here and we are standing before the forces of power in the state of Alabama saying, ‘We ain’t goin’ let nobody turn us around.’”

The photos from the marches and media coverage of the dead and beaten highlighted for a large swath of the American people the dangers that activists were enduring and the need to dismantle Jim Crow laws and voting restrictions. There was a large outcry in the country over what had happened. Made to move by these powerful forces, Congress put together the Voting Rights Act with President Lyndon B. Johnson signing it into law on August 6, 1965.

It made many of the voting obstacles that states like Alabama had enacted illegal. It also established federal oversight of states who have historically denied black people and poor white the right to vote. These states could not make any changes to voting practices without first getting approval or preclearance from the Department of Justice. Long considered a landmark piece of civil-rights legislation, it suffered a significant setback when the Supreme Court issued a ruling that gutted a key provision in the act in 2013. Soon after, many polling places in African American communities were shut down, thereby possibly reducing voting turnout.

Today, activists are working to expand voting opportunities and increase voter registration despite obstacles like the 2013 Supreme County ruling, onerous voter ID laws, purges of voting rolls, and racial gerrymandering.

“Let us stand with a greater determination.

And let us move on in these powerful days, these days of challenge to make America what it ought to be.

We have an opportunity to make America a better nation.

And I want to thank God once more for allowing me to be here with you.”

– Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

vocabulary

Civil War

The conflict between the North and South states in America from April 12, 1861 to May 9, 1865. The central question that gave impetus to the conflict was over slavery and whether Southern states could continue to hold people in bondage.

Grandfather clause

A law that stipulated that a person could vote if a previous generation had a record of voting before the Civil War. This was an example of a Jim Crow voting restriction tactic. It was also a way to make sure poor whites, who could not meet other voting sanctions like the poll tax, could still vote.

Jim Crow

A political, economic, and social system of white supremacy widespread in the South after the Civil War and the Reconstruction Era. It was an apartheid system that discriminated against African Americans by denying them access to the same facilities that white people could use, such as schools, water fountains, lunchtime counters, etc. It permeated every aspect of black life in the South. Voting restrictions were also part of Jim Crow.

Ku Klux Klan

A violent, white supremacist terrorist organization formed after the Civil War with the intention of suppressing and disenfranchising African Americans.

Literacy tests

A Jim Crow law that mandated that people had to pass a reading and writing test before getting the opportunity to vote. This caused many African Americans to be disenfranchised.

Non-violent resistance

A civil disobedience tactic meant to confront suppressive authority. Activists do not respond to acts of violence with violence but instead with peaceful disobedience such as marching, boycotts, getting arrested, occupying facilities, sit ins, and other tactics. Martin Luther King, Jr., Gandhi, Henry David Thoreau, and other notable philosophers and activists have shaped and put into action the theories of non-violent resistance against an evil system.

Poll tax

A Jim Crow law that mandated that people had to pay a tax before registering to vote.

Racial gerrymandering

When voter district lines are drawn to suppress the power of racial minorities and thus preventing them from voting their preferred candidates.

Reconstruction Era

The period after the Civil War that saw America trying to heal the divisions in the states and grapple with the emancipation of African Americans from slavery. It had some successes with black people ascending to higher office. But Southern states violently fought against the enfranchisement of blacks by enacting Jim Crow laws.

Voter ID laws

Laws that require people to show ID before voting. They were passed by state legislatures due to concern about widespread voting fraud, which has turned out to be false, according to numerous news reports. Voting fraud is a rare occurrence, according to news reports and academic papers. Some studies have shown strict voting laws have suppressed minority turnout.

Voting roll purges

The way for states to cleanse their voting rolls of people who have died or moved away or are infrequent voters. Voting rights activists say this tactic has impacted at a larger rate minorities. There have been documented instances of people intending to vote but discovering they have been purged from the rolls.

White supremacy

An idea that whites are superior to black people and other races and ethnicities and that whites should be dominant over these other groups. This racist ideology could be encoded explicitly in law such as voting restrictions or implicitly in the way black people and other ethnicities are treated in the public or private sphere. Implicit strains of white supremacy may manifest itself in the adverse treatment of black students versus white students in schools, the care of black mothers in hospitals, or the how black and Latinx people are busted at a larger rate for drug use and other low-level offenses compared to whites.

resources

Websites

Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom, theater performance website
turning15ontheroad.com

Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom, book page
penguinrandomhouse.com/books/315827

Lynda Blackmon Lowery NPR interview
npr.org/2015/01/17/377197156/new-memoir-recalls-marching-in-selma-at-just-15

Linda Blackmon Lowery, Youngest Selma Marcher, Inspires Students
slj.com/?detailStory=linda-blackmon-lowery-youngest-selma-marcher-inspires-students

Ally Sheedy, IMDB page
imdb.com/name/nm0000639

Damaras Obi, Backstage profile
backstage.com/u/damaras-obi

National Voting Rights Museum and Institute on the Selma Movement
nvrmi.com/?page_id=43

Selma to Montgomery March Trail
nps.gov/nr/travel/civilrights/al4.htm

Selma to Montgomery March, Martin Luther King, Jr. Research & Education Institute
kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/selma-montgomery-march

Videos

Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom, video excerpt
youtu.be/csY7RBesVpQ

Interview with Ally Sheedy and Damaras Obi on Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom
youtu.be/f5Ru0BQRFwE&t=100s

Lynda Blackmon Lowery at the Library of Congress
youtu.be/8l9XUTn88y4

March from Selma to Montgomery American Freedom Stories | Biography
youtu.be/q1_KtW-9tlg

Selma 1965, CNN
youtu.be/QAJzlwWEcE

The Obamas March in Selma
youtu.be/N3E7atni5dg

Books

Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom: My Story of the 1965 Selma Voting Rights March
Lynda Blackmon Lowery, Speak, 2016

Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years, 1954-1965
Juan Williams, Penguin Books, 2013

The Story of the Selma Voting Rights Marches in Photographs (The Story of the Civil Rights Movement in Photographs)
David Aretha, Enslow Pub Inc, 2014

The Race Beat: The Press, the Civil Rights Struggle, and the Awakening of a Nation
Gene Roberts and Hank Klibanoff, Vintage, 2007

If You Were a Kid During the Civil Rights Movement
Gwendolyn Hooks and Kelly Kennedy, C. Press/F. Watts Trade, 2017

Peaceful Fights for Equal Rights
Rob Sanders, Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2018

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the arts in your school

In-School Residencies: Drama + Social Studies. Dance + Math. It all adds up in NJPAC's In-School Residencies in which professional teaching artists partner with educators to bring the arts into the classroom. Each 7- to 10-week program culminates in a student performance or an interactive family workshop. All programs address state and national standards. NJPAC is the regional provider in New Jersey for international arts programs like the NJ Wolf Trap Program and Dancing Classrooms Global.

Assemblies: NJPAC presents engaging school assembly programs that are presented by professional artists that invite students into the enchanting world of live performance. NJPAC's assembly series promotes cultural awareness and invigorates learning by presenting works that are connected to your school's curriculum.

Professional Development: NJPAC Professional Development engages classroom teachers, arts specialists and teaching artists as integrated teams that combine arts pedagogy, content, classroom management and social behavioral strategies to ignite and inspire arts-rich classrooms. Working as a team empowers teachers to share practice and strategy. Our goal is to inspire artistic and intellectual capacities in students, building competence and confidence in both students and teachers.

study the arts at njpac

Saturday Programs: NJPAC's Saturday programs are geared towards students at every level—from those who dream of starring on Broadway to those who are still learning their scales. Students work with professional artists to build technique and develop their own creative style in film, contemporary modern dance, hip hop, jazz, musical theater and symphonic band.

Summer Programs: Want to begin to explore the arts? Or immerse yourself in the study of one genre? Then join us at NJPAC next summer in one of seven programs that spark the creativity in every child through the study of music, dance and theater.

arts education njpac

discover. create. grow.

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Generous annual support for NJPAC Arts Education Programs is provided by: NJ Advance Media/The Star-Ledger, McCrane Foundation, Inc., care of Margrit McCrane, John and Suzanne William/Goldman Sachs Gives, MCJ Amelior Foundation, Amy Liss, Jennifer A. Chalsty, Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies, Panasonic Corporation of America, and Atlantic, Tomorrow's Office, Stewart and Judy Colton